



SORRT

Network Newsletter

Smart Organizations Reduce
and Recycle Tons

Montgomery County, Maryland

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Peer to Peer Focus

Brookside Gardens recycling and waste reduction initiatives: "Just a new way of doing Business"

SORRT interviewed Stephanie Oberle, Director of Brookside Gardens, about their recycling and waste reduction program. As the Director of Brookside Gardens, Ms. Oberle manages the park's facilities, the horticultural display garden and facility operations. Brookside Gardens is Montgomery County's incomparable, award-winning 50-acre public display garden situated within Wheaton Regional Park. Included in the gardens are several distinct garden areas, two conservatories for year-round enjoyment and a horticultural reference library in the Visitors Center.

For over 13 years, Brookside Gardens has recognized the importance of environmental stewardship. According to Ms. Oberle, *"Being so close to nature, the normal inclination is to be very aware of the environmental impact we have on the planet, so environmental awareness is more second nature when you're in the element."* The facility has always recycled the County's mandatory materials and composted garden trimmings. It's recycling and waste management program has developed naturally, growing of its own accord and as a result of the staffs' personal interests, awareness and stewardship values.

Two years ago, Brookside Gardens established a Green Team comprised of representatives from each part of the gardens to brainstorm about ways to include sustainable initiatives in their efforts and improve the gardens' operations. As a result of the Green Team's suggestions and ideas, Brookside Gardens implemented a number of recycling and waste reduction initiatives including:

- Banning the use of plastic water bottles at the gardens. Visitors are encouraged to bring their own reusable and refillable bottles. The water fountains around the facility have been outfitted to make refilling easier.
- Discouraging the use of disposable tableware at events held at Brookside Gardens. Both employees and visitors are encouraged to use reusable dishware that can be washed after the event and when this is not possible, Brookside encourages the use of compostable tableware.



- Installing hand dryers in restrooms. This has resulted in cost savings by eliminating the costs associated with the purchase of paper towels and reduced the amount of waste generated that must be sent for disposal. The initial upfront costs of the hand dryers may have been high, but the savings over the lifetime of the dryers will balance out in 3 years.
- Maximizing composting efforts and encouraging employees to bring in garden waste from their own gardens to be composted on-site.
- Purchasing recycled-content products such as carpeting and toilet paper. Recycled-content carpet can be washed easily or sent directly back to the manufacturer for recycling.

Brookside Gardens has also implemented a number of other sustainable initiatives including the installation of rain gardens to manage storm water runoff and reduce water pollution and has replaced all light bulbs with energy efficient bulbs. Information pertaining to their environmental activities will be posted on their website, along with resources and ideas that the public can implement as well. Coming this spring, visitors will notice "Green Matters" signs and placards posted around the grounds identifying sustainable techniques used at Brookside Gardens.

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Peer to Peer Focus

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"Changing the way Brookside Gardens operates has been relatively easy, although there has been some minor resistance, mostly as a consequence of less convenience versus an objection to the environmental efforts," stated Ms. Oberle. For example, Brookside implemented a plan to eliminate individual desktop printers by installing more energy efficient and centralized laser printers.

The practice has limited the purchase of expensive, short-term ink cartridges, reduced unnecessary printing and reduced energy consumption. However, staff members had to get accustomed to leaving their desks to retrieve printed materials, but as Ms. Oberly puts it: *"Implementing these initiatives and modifying behavior has been challenging, but it's just a new way of doing business."*

Zero Waste Having lunch at the office can reduce the amount of waste generated



If you've ever looked in the trash container in the kitchen area at your place of business, you know that lunchtime activities can produce a tremendous amount of waste. If colleagues regularly buy lunch or bring packaged meals, a considerable amount of trash may be generated as a result. An easy way to reduce the amount of waste your office produces is to encourage colleagues and employees to pack a Zero Waste lunch. Zero Waste lunches are lunches prepared in a manner that produces the least amount of waste, from the beginning of preparation until lunch is complete. For example, a typical carryout lunch may include foam or plastic containers or wrap, paper cups or plastic drink bottles, plastic utensils, paper napkins and paper or plastic bags. This amount of trash can easily be decreased or eliminated if lunch is prepared at and brought from home.

Here are some ways to encourage employees and co-workers to pack a Zero Waste lunch:

- **Food** – Buy food in bulk or in larger sizes to divide at home. Avoid single-use prepackaged foods, such as single-serving size potato chips, which produce more waste and are more expensive.

- **Drinks** – Pack soft and liquid foods in durable reusable containers, and use thermoses or plastic bottles for drinks. Avoid purchasing single-serving sized bottles of water or soda if possible.
- **Lunch containers** – Purchase and use reusable durable-type containers.
- **Lunch bags** – Pack lunches in lunch boxes or use durable canvas or nylon bags.
- **Napkin** – Use a cloth napkin.
- **Utensils** – Use your own reusable and washable utensils.

And if you do want to go out for lunch, consider eating at restaurants or cafés that promote sustainable practices. If your business has a cafeteria, some of the same principles outlined above can be used on a larger scale, if everyone is willing to participate. Upfront cost may be higher, but consider the long-term savings when considering how you can modify your current practices.

In the end, one of the biggest benefits of practicing a Zero Waste lunch routine is that you can save money, reduce waste, and eat healthier, even if you implement just one of these ideas every day.

DID YOU KNOW?

Based upon the Division of Solid Waste Services most recent analysis of the County's overall waste stream, nearly 19 percent of businesses' trash includes recyclable paper. This accounts for over 67,100 tons of paper that should and must be recycled.

FOCUS ON Commingled Materials

Executive Regulation 15-04AM requires all businesses in Montgomery County to recycle commingled materials, which includes aluminum cans, bi-metal steel/tin cans, glass bottles and jars and plastic bottles and containers in addition to mixed paper, yard trim, Christmas trees and scrap metal. Businesses have the option of separating the various types of commingled materials for collection to maximize potential revenue from the sale of these recyclable materials, but make sure you do your part to recycle all of them.

For regional market prices, the value of aluminum cans has seen a steady increase since the middle of 2009 from \$940.00 per ton to \$1,320.00 per ton; a 40 percent increase over a six month period. The prices for steel cans increased as well from \$85.00 per ton to \$97.50 per ton; an increase of 14 percent over the previous price.

Glass bottles and jars (clear, green and brown) are primarily recycled into brand new glass bottles and jars. Also, clear glass can be used to make optical lenses such as microscopes, binoculars and telescopes. The value for all colors of glass remained steady throughout this six-month period, though national prices experienced some volatility at different times in the year.



PET #1 or Polyethylene terephthalate, is a plastic resin, coded #1 on a plastic bottles and food containers. These containers are popular for food and non-food packaging, such as soft drinks, juice, salad dressings, cosmetics and household cleaners. There are many uses for this plastic which can be recycled into a form of polyester. HDPE #2 plastic is high-density polyethylene material made from petroleum and is coded with the #2 recycling symbol. Typically used for laundry detergent bottles, milk jugs, and bottle caps. For the most part, prices for PET #1 and Natural HDPE #2 (milk containers) experienced moderate growths during this six-month period, increasing 18 percent and four percent respectively. However, colored #2 HDPE plastic (laundry detergent containers) increased more significantly from \$260.00 per ton to \$360.00 per ton; a 38 percent increase for this six-month period.

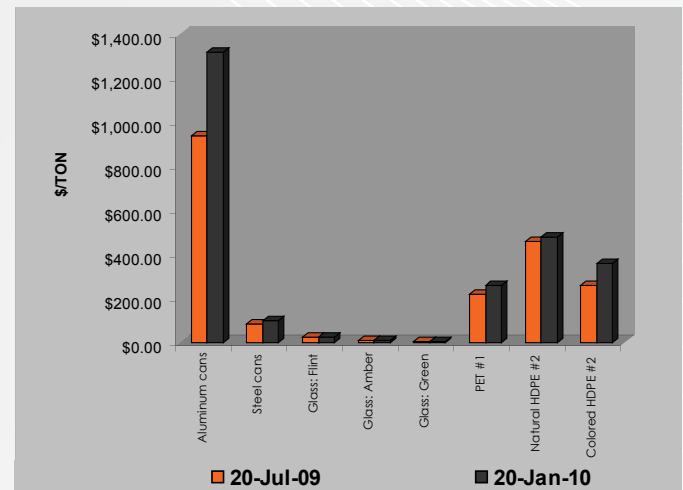
Metal, Glass, and Plastic Market Prices

Average Recycled Commodity prices in U.S. dollars, unless indicated.
NORTHEAST USA/MARITIMES REGION

	JULY 20, 2009	JANUARY 20, 2010
METAL (AVERAGE LOOSE PRICE)		
ALUMINUM CANS (\$/TON)	\$940.00	\$1,320.00
STEEL CANS (\$/TON)	\$85.00	\$97.50
GLASS		
FLINT (\$/TON)	\$22.50	\$22.50
AMBER (\$/TON)	\$9.00	\$9.00
GREEN (\$/TON)	\$4.00	\$4.00
PLASTICS		
PET #1 BALED (\$/TON)	\$220.00	\$260.00
NATURAL HDPE #2 BALED (\$/TON)	\$460.00	\$480.00
COLORED HDPE #2 BALED (\$/TON)	\$260.00	\$360.00

Metal, Glass, and Plastic Prices

Materials Picked Up at Seller's Dock
NORTHEAST USA/MARITIMES REGION



This market pricing report is intended to provide your business with information regarding the value of recyclable materials in the recycling markets. Recycling these and other materials can translate into potential revenue for your organization. Don't throw away these valuable materials. Not only is recycling the law in Montgomery County, but your business can save money by removing these materials from the waste stream, reducing waste collection and disposal costs. In addition, work with your recycling contractor to determine if any of the revenues from the sale of recyclable materials can be passed on to your business.

Recycling and Waste Reduction

Ways to improve your environmental efforts and save money

Finding ways to improve your businesses' environmental efforts can be challenging. Employees and customers may resist the changes that result from efforts to implement environmentally-friendly practices and the objective may be lost in the myriad of ways to achieve environmental goals. For example, changing your purchasing policies to include recycled-content office supplies may take time and research, but with teamwork and staff input, your business could help save the environment and boost your bottom line at the same time.



One way to start a new greening effort is to put together a team. There are many ways to save money through implementing various environmental efforts, so support those staff members who are interested in greening your office, and help them discover ways for your business to protect the environment and save money, too. Here are some recycling and waste reduction ideas that can be easily implemented with the help of your green team at your workplace:

Kitchen

- Purchase reusable supplies for your kitchen, i.e. reusable plates, cups, mugs, flatware.
- Use cloth dishtowels.
- Use reusable coffee filters.

Office

- Reuse packing boxes, encourage the supplier to buy them back, or give them to someone else to reuse.
- Eliminate desktop printers. This reduces the number of ink cartridges that you have to purchase and if this is not an option, check with the manufacturer if you can return the used cartridge to them for refilling or recycling. You can also look for companies in your area that will recycle toner cartridges. To find a listing of local companies that recycle toner cartridges visit our website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling.
- Use rechargeable batteries and reduce the cost of purchasing alkaline batteries.
- Try reviewing and editing documents on the computer. If you have to print draft documents, be sure to print double-sided.
- Use outdated letterhead for in-house memos.

Working with other businesses and customers

- Limit the amount of packaging for your products.
- Ask suppliers about take-back initiatives for unused products to get your money back or a percentage of the cost.
- Maintain equipment. Equipment that is well maintained is less likely to break and require replacement.
- Invest in durable equipment that can withstand continued use and doesn't have to be replaced as frequently.
- Install hand dryers. This will reduce the cost of purchasing paper towels and reduce waste disposal costs.
- Encourage a culture of using reusable bags at your work place.
- Restaurants can provide customers with reusable dishes, flatware, etc. If you provide disposable napkins and utensils, ask customers first if they need them.

By implementing some of these efforts, your business can save money. Also, these efforts show your employees and customers that your business cares for the environment.

For more information on how to start a recycling team at your business or ideas on waste reduction initiatives, visit our website at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling.

Contact Us

Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services

240-777-6486
240-777-6465 (fax)
240-777-6442 (tty)
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling
email: recycle@montgomerycountymd.gov

County Transfer Station 240-777-6560

County Recycling Center 301-417-1433

This information is available in an alternative format by calling Gabriela Monzon-Reynolds at 240-777-6486.



Montgomery County
Division of Solid Waste Services
SORRT Program
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Rockville, Maryland 20850

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SAVE THE DATE!

- **Earth Day is April 22, 2010**

Celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day by hosting an event for your employees. Contact the SORRT Program at **240-777-6437** if you need assistance planning your event.

Learn more about recycling by visiting our educational table at the following locations:

- **Rockville Flower and Garden Festival**

April 24, 2010 | 10:00am-5:00pm
Rockville Town Square, Rockville

- **Rockville Science Day**

April 25, 2010 | 12:00pm-5:00pm
Montgomery College, Rockville Campus



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RECYCLING CHECKLIST

Commercial properties and businesses must recycle the following materials if these are generated:

Mixed or Sorted Paper

- ☒ White & Colored Paper
- ☒ Cardboard, Boxboard & Cereal Boxes
- ☒ Newspaper & Inserts
- ☒ Magazines & Catalogs
- ☒ Telephone, Paperback & Hardcover Books
- ☒ Unwanted Mail & Envelopes (with or without windows)
- ☒ Shredded Paper & All Other Clean and Dry Paper

Commingled Containers

- ☒ Glass Bottles & Jars
- ☒ Aluminum Cans & Foil Products
- ☒ Bi-Metal Food & Beverage Cans
- ☒ Plastic Bottles, Containers, Jars, Tubs, Lids, Pails/Buckets and Flower Pots

Yard Trim

(Grass, Leaves and Brush)

Christmas Trees

Scrap Metal



IT'S NEVER TOO LATE FOR RECYCLING...

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/recycling